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Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain became Director of CASR in April 2005. Chris was previously in the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute at RMIT, and before that he was Head of Sociology at Monash University. Chris is an expert on homelessness. He is most well known for his book, ‘Youth Homelessness: Early Intervention and Prevention’ and for his work on ‘Counting the Homeless 2001’ with the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Chris is currently undertaking ‘Counting the Homeless 2006’ and working on an ARC project, ‘Pathways into and out of Homelessness’.

**Expertise in CASR**

CASR conducts nationally significant research on key areas of social change and social policy. We are committed to the idea that effective and equitable policy choices need to be founded upon insightful public debate and that debate requires historically and theoretically informed applied social research. Research staff in CASR have a broad range of interests, but our work converges around two themes.

One group of researchers have particular expertise in the changing character of paid work and employment relations and related policy issues. In 2006 the people in this cluster were Dr Iain Campbell, Dr Sara Charlesworth, Dr Donna Baines, Dr Jenny Chalmers, Dr Kerri Whittenbury, Ms Robyn May, Ms Sheree Cartwright and Ms Fiona McDonald. Their research interests include: the quality of part-time work; gender equality in employment; casual and precarious work; the intersection of work and family; and the impact of employment regulation, including anti-discrimination law. The research conducted in these areas is also concerned with uncovering and mapping the connections that link the worlds of paid work and welfare.

Another group of colleagues in CASR focus on various disadvantaged groups, the changing nature of welfare provision and related policy issues. In 2006 they were Assoc. Prof. Chris Chamberlain, Dr Suellen Murray, Dr James Rowe, Dr Alperhan Babacan, Dr Liz Branigan, Dr Guy Johnson, Ms Anastasia Powell, Ms Jenny Malone and Ms Jacqui Theobald. These researchers have particular expertise in: the quantification and experiences the homeless population; pathways into and out of homelessness; domestic violence and related policy responses; and the history of the women’s refuge movement. They also carry out research focusing on: persons with disabilities and their families; asylum seekers and immigrants; refugee and immigration policy; and research focusing on issues related to illicit drugs use, sex workers and related health issues.

Our staff have expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. CASR researchers bring together the disciplinary strengths of sociology, economics, politics, law and legal studies, globalisation, gender studies and history, as well as skills in program design and evaluation. There is a vibrant research culture in the Centre for Applied Social Research and colleagues work collaboratively, supporting each other in their various endeavours.

**ARC Projects, Contract Research and the Future**

Colleagues in CASR have a strong track record of success with ARC grant applications. In 2006 we had sixteen ongoing ARC projects (nine Linkage and seven Discovery) and there will be a number of new applications for ARC projects in 2007. ARC projects attract considerable prestige in the university because the successful applicant has been judged by his or her peers to be a leader in their research area.

CASR also has a strong record in contract research. Contract projects in 2006 included an evaluation of the Salvation Army’s Access Health Centre which provides services for street based IV drug users, carried out by Dr James Rowe. In 2006, Dr Alperhan Babacan began an evaluation of the Belonging in Australia project which is funded by the Department of Victorian Communities. The Belonging in Australia project aims to develop better outcomes for newly arrived and emerging communities in the City of Yarra, through the establishment of coordinated services and community building activities for new settlers. In 2006, CASR was awarded a contract to carry out ‘Counting the Homeless 2006’. This is a three year project (2006-09) funded by the Commonwealth and all State and Territory governments.
CASR is an established research centre with a track record of ARC success and substantial contract research. This augurs well for the future, although there are clearly challenges ahead. In 2007, we will see the introduction of the Commonwealth Government’s changes to higher education known as the Research Quality Framework (RQF). The RQF will assess the research output of universities in terms of ‘quality’ and ‘community impact’. The Centre for Applied Social Research at RMIT is well positioned to demonstrate both the quality of its research and also its ‘community impact’ in a wide range of policy areas.

Chris Chamberlain
Director
Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategic focus of the Centre are:

- To conduct high quality research with a focus on the restructuring of employment and social welfare.
- To promote informed public discussion about these policy areas.
- To provide postgraduate research students with the opportunity to be involved in CASR’s interdisciplinary research activities.
- To maintain an emphasis on balancing peer-reviewed competitive grant research with contract research for industry partners and community agencies.
- The Centre for Applied Social Research (CASR) is a research centre committed to having vibrant links with its environment. These links include relationships with the School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning in which it is located, with other researchers in Australia and internationally, and with a range of industry partners and community agencies.
We saw some significant staff changes in 2006. Dr Alpherhan Babacan joined us as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the beginning of 2006. Alperhan had recently completed a PhD on ‘Citizenship Rights in a Global World: a Comparative Analysis of Refugee and Asylum Seeker Laws and Policies in Australia, Canada and New Zealand’.

Dr Liz Branigan (Post Doctoral Fellow) and Ms Jenny Malone (Research Assistant) joined us to work on the ARC Linkage project, ‘Life After Care – the Life-Histories of those who left Institutional and other Forms of Out-of-Home Care, 1945-1989’. Ms Anastasia Powell (Research Assistant) was appointed to work on the ARC Discovery project, ‘Australian Domestic Violence Public Policy: History, Discourse and Impact, 1985-2005’.

In July we welcomed Dr Donna Baines, who is with us for a year visiting from the Department of Labour Studies and Social Work at McMaster University, Hamilton in Canada. Dr Baines’ areas of interest are paid and unpaid work, home-work life balance, women’s occupational health, and workplace organizing and resistance to the local effects of globalization and restructuring. Her research explores the many faces of restructuring and globalization in the social services sector.

Ms Susie Elliott joined us in July as the Assistant Editor of ‘Labour & Industry’ following the departure of Ms Adel Sarkzi earlier in the year.

We appointed Mrs Annette Bando, our CASR Coordinator and Ms Vanessa Reidy, who is our Finance Officer. Ms Fiona Macdonald and Mr Warren Fridell joined us as Research Assistants.
During 2006 we farewelled the following CASR staff. Robyn May left us in the latter half of the year and is now with the National Tertiary Education Union head office in South Melbourne. Dr Kerri Whittenbury left us at the end of the year to take up a position as a Research Fellow with the Institute of Land, Water and Society, Charles Sturt University. Sheree Cartwright, Jacqui Theobald and Warren Fridell, our Research Assistants, all left CASR in December. Sheree and Jacqui both remain at RMIT as Post Graduates. Sheree is writing up her PhD and Jacqui is to complete her PhD under the supervision of Dr Suellen Murray. Warren has taken up a position with the Department of Justice, Victoria.
Academics Associated with CASR

CASR has associations with many researchers both within and beyond RMIT. Those who were most closely associated during 2006 and were involved in CASR research projects, included:

Associate Research Fellows

**Emeritus Professor Lois Bryson**  
Associate Research Fellow

**Dr Greg Marston**  
University of Queensland

**Emeritus Professor Martin Mowbray**  
Associate Research Fellow

**Associate Professor John Murphy**  
University of Melbourne

**Professor Belinda Probert**  
Dean, Faculty of Arts  
University of Melbourne

School Staff Associated with CASR

**Professor Mike Berry**  
Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)

**Dr Matthew Clarke**  
International Studies

**Associate Professor Tony Dalton**  
Social Science

**Dr Kim Humphery**  
Social Science

**Dr Helen Marshall**  
Social Science

**Associate Professor Jock McCulloch**  
Social Science

**Associate Professor Pavla Miller**  
Social Science

**Dr Judith Shaw**  
International Development

**Professor Rob Watts**  
Social Policy

**Professor Gavin Wood**  
Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)
Advisory Committee

RMIT Internal Appointments

Professor Neil Furlong
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation

Professor Bruce Wilson
Head of School, School of Social Science and Planning

Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain
Director, Centre for Applied Social Research

Dr Iain Campbell
Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Applied Social Research

Professor Megan-Jane Johnstone
Professor of Nursing, School of Health Sciences

External Appointments

Dr Michael Bittman
Research Fellow, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales

Professor Lois Bryson
Emeritus Professor, Newcastle University and Adjunct Professor, RMIT University

Ms Jeanette Pope
Research Manager, Strategic Policy & Research Division, Department for Victorian Communities

Mr David Thompson
Chief Executive Officer, Jobs Australia

Ms Cath Bowtell
Industrial Officer, Australian Council of Trade Unions
Research Projects

CASS staff undertake a variety of research projects which can be divided into Australian Research Council (ARC) and contract projects.

ARC Projects

Continuing ARC Projects:

ARC Discovery Project. Australian Domestic Violence Public Policy: History, Discourse and Impact, 1985 to 2005
In this project, Suellen Murray and Anastasia Powell are investigating the development and impact of domestic violence policy in Australia over the past twenty years. Through a combination of textual analysis and interviews with key policy makers, the research is documenting the history of public policy responses to domestic violence in Australia and analysing the range of approaches and their implications over this time. The identification of domestic violence as a policy problem was at least partly a response to feminist activism and the project also considers how public policy has made sense of these feminist interventions.

ARC Discovery Project. Casual Employees and Trade Union Representation in Australia: An Analysis of Channels and Barriers to Effective Trade Union Representation
This study aims to describe and explain the barriers and channels to effective representation of casual workers in Australian unions, using analysis of ABS data, a survey of casual workers, semi-structured interviews with union officials, and case-studies of union campaigns. The study offers an innovative multi-disciplinary framework for analysis of two of the most significant and interlocking trends affecting Australian workplaces: the growth of casual work and the decline of union influence. Outcomes include published contributions to the international academic literature on labour restructuring and union renewal and a policy-oriented discussion paper for an Australian audience. Iain Campbell is conducting this project together with Robyn May and Jenny Chalmers. It runs from 2004 to 2006.

ARC Discovery Project. The Quality of Part-Time Employment in Australia: Dimensions, Prospects and Policy
Part-time employment is an important and growing phenomenon in Australia, as in most OECD countries. While research has focused on the quantity of part-time employment, the key dimension of quality has been neglected. This project develops a sophisticated conceptual framework for assessing the quality of part-time employment, drawing on cross-national comparisons and using a gender systems approach. It produces a comprehensive and practical assessment of the quality of part-time employment in Australia, including two detailed industry case studies. Finally, the project evaluates the main policy paths for improving the quality of part-time employment. The project runs from 2004 to 2006 and is being conducted by Iain Campbell, Jenny Chalmers and Sara Charlesworth.

ARC Discovery Project. Understandings of Women’s Disadvantage at Work: Discourses of Discrimination in the Workplace
In analysing the persistence of women’s disadvantage in the workplace, research has focused on the inadequacy of anti-discrimination law and both government and corporate EEO policies. Less attention has been paid to the myriad ways in which these proscriptions of discrimination are understood and implemented in the workplace. This project examines workplace discourses around sex discrimination through a range of industry case studies. It contributes to a better theoretical understanding of the ways in which women’s disadvantage is constructed and negotiated within specific organisational contexts and cultures and also provides practical guidance for human right agencies. It is being conducted by Sara Charlesworth.
ARC Discovery Project. Anti-Consumerism in the Contemporary West
This project investigates contemporary critiques of Western consumption emanating from within Western societies themselves. Divided into three interconnecting research themes, the project offers a selective review of recent media and intellectual commentary on the consequences of consumption, a brief documentation of recent ‘anti-consumption’ activism in Europe, North America and Australasia, and an Australian-based ethnographic exploration of how people limit consumption activities within contemporary everyday life. The project will culminate in a book-length study, representing one of the first attempts to fully document how ‘Western consumerism’ is currently being challenged by intellectuals, social movement activists and ‘consumers’ themselves. Kim Humphery is conducting this project.

ARC Discovery Project. Asbestos: The History of a Commodity
This is the first world history of the asbestos industry and its social impact. It investigates key aspects of the mineral’s life story in regard to mining, manufacture, medical discovery, labour, social movements, the law and the State. The project is theoretically innovative in linking the distinct bodies of knowledge that flow from each of those sites. It also raises significant questions that cannot be answered within separate disciplines. The resulting book and articles will provide practical tools for those seeking improved working conditions and assist those seeking legal redress for asbestos related disease. Jock McCulloch is conducting this project.

ARC Linkage Project. Leveraging Remittance with Microfinance - A Cross Country Study
This study recognises the high and growing significance of overseas migrant remittances as contributors to GDP and household livelihoods in many countries. It responds to current policy interest in remittances as a development resource, as well as security concerns related to informal funds transfers. This groundbreaking study works with microfinance providers in six Asia-Pacific countries (Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Samoa, Fiji and Tonga) to investigate the impacts of remittance-linked financial services on household well-being and economic development. The study identifies how existing and new services can best promote development and poverty reduction in migrant-sending areas. The project is being run by Judith Shaw and Robyn Eversole.

ARC Linkage Project. Life After Care - The Life-Histories of Those Who Left Institutional and Other Forms of Out-of-Home Care, 1945-1989
This project, developed in close collaboration with the Industry Partner, MacKillop Family Services, examines the impact of having been in out-of-home care for the subsequent identities and life histories of successive generations of care leavers. While focused on Catholic institutions in Victoria, it provides more general insights into the role of the church-based children’s homes. The project is being undertaken by Suellen Murray, John Murphy (University of Melbourne), Liz Branigan and Jenny Malone.

ARC Linkage Project. History of the Women’s Refuge Movement 1974 to 2004
With Industry Partner, Domestic Violence Victoria, this project traces the unique history of the women’s refuge movement in Victoria, from its initiation in 1974 through to a period of significant change in 2004. Doctoral student, Jacqui Theobald, commenced working on the project in 2007 and is being supervised by Suellen Murray and Judy Smart.

ARC Linkage Project. Pathways into and out of Homelessness
Chris Chamberlain and Guy Johnson are carrying out this project in collaboration with The Salvation Army Crisis Services and HomeGround Services. Effective interventions to assist homeless people depend upon understanding the reasons why people become homeless and how they exit from homelessness. This research investigates people’s pathways into and out of the homeless population, and explains why some households experience a short period of homelessness, whereas others remain homeless for a sustained period of time. The findings inform our knowledge about best practice and effective service delivery. The research will influence the thinking of policy makers and service providers for some years to come.
ARC Linkage Project. Ethnographies of Housing: Exploring the Role of Housing Officers in Public Housing Service Provision

This research examines the everyday practice of public housing officers working in the Victorian Office of Housing. It is funded by the ARC with an APA(I) scholarship from 2004 to 2006, in partnership with the Victorian Office of Housing in the Department of Human Services. The project analyses the ways that workers exercise discretion, and the patterns of meanings that they construct, through their interactions with clients, departmental managers and other human service providers. The PhD student is Tony Chalkley and the project is supervised by Tony Dalton and Rob Watts.

ARC Linkage Project. Policing and Quality Part-Time Work: Constraints and Options

Research suggests that a major barrier to retaining women both in sworn and unsworn positions in police work is the limited provision and uptake of part-time work. A related impediment is the conditions associated with the part-time work available in policing services. This project uses an action research approach to analyse the constraints on and options for ensuring that part-time work within Victoria Police is good ‘quality’ work. The project outcomes will contribute to better theoretical and organisational understandings of the dimensions of quality in the implementation of part-time work in public policing and in other organisational contexts. The project is being conducted by Sara Charlesworth, Kerri Whittenbury and Iain Campbell.

ARC Linkage Project. Low Paid Services Employment in Australia: Dimensions, Causes, Effects and Responses

Iain Campbell is working with Barbara Pocock, Susan Oakley (both University of Adelaide) John Buchanan and Ian Watson (both University of Sydney), in collaboration with the Brotherhood of St Lawrence, the Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union, the Labour Councils of NSW and South Australia and the Victorian Trades Hall Council on this four year project. The project brings together academic researchers with those who assist and advocate for the low paid in both the union and welfare sectors, to develop understanding about low paid services sector work in Australia. The Victorian component of the project centres on a case study of the cleaning industry. It is being conducted by Robyn May from 2005 to 2006.

ARC Linkage Project. Work-Life Integration: Developing the ‘Dual Agenda’ in Theory and Practice

Sara Charlesworth is working with Marian Baird from Sydney University, in collaboration with two large Australian organisations on this two year project. This project addresses the reconciliation of requirements for organisational efficiency with employee needs to balance work, personal and family life. Current research indicates that the adoption of standard ‘family-friendly’ policies is hindered by traditional, gendered work processes, organisational norms and structures. A new approach called the ‘dual agenda’ for change is advocated to resolve this problem. The project tests the application of the ‘dual agenda’ in two large Australian organisations. The data produced identifies policies and processes which meet the ‘dual agenda’ of gender equitable, improved work-life outcomes for employees and improved business outcomes for organisations. The project commenced early in 2005. The Victorian component is being conducted by Sara Charlesworth and Sheree Cartwright.
Contract Projects

Through short-term contract projects with a range of partners, CASR researchers are committed to making a difference, to building partnerships with government and community organisations, and to laying the groundwork for potential larger projects. These contract projects listed here were undertaken in 2006.

The Impact of Changes in National Work Regulation on Minimum Wage Workers
This project is funded by the National Foundation of Australian Women, YWCA Australia, Women’s Electoral Lobby, ACT, NSW, QLD, VIC, WA and SA State Governments. The Project is being undertaken by a multi-university research team and aims to undertake a national qualitative assessment of the effects of changes in work regulation brought about by the WorkChoices amendments on specific groups of minimum wage workers. These include women, young people, workers with disabilities, and workers of non-English speaking background, in five industries: childcare, aged care, cleaning, retail and hospitality. The project is being carried out by Sara Charlesworth and Fiona MacDonald.

Work and Family Balance in Regional Victoria - a Pilot Project
The research focuses on four regional areas: Latrobe Valley, Bendigo, Colac and Horsham. Funded by Industrial Relations Victoria and Regional Development Victoria, the project draws on an analysis of available statistical data to identify major regional socio-demographic, industry and employment characteristics that might impact on work and family balance. It also draws on consultation with key stakeholders and employee focus groups, together with input from regional forums held to provide feedback on the project findings, and possible local options to better support work family balance for working families in each of the areas studied. The project is being undertaken by Iain Campbell, Sara Charlesworth and Warren Fridell.

Factors Affecting the Conciliation of Complaints Under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
This is a scoping project being carried out by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. The project seeks to identify factors influencing the resolution of complaints lodged at the Commission under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (the EO Act). The files examined include both successfully and unsuccessfully conciliated complaints. The data analysis for the project is being carried out by Sara Charlesworth.

Belonging in Australia
The Belonging in Australia project is funded from January 2006 to December 2008 by the Department of Victorian Communities. The Project aims to develop better outcomes for current and future newly arrived and emerging communities in the City of Yarra. This will be done through the establishment of integrated and coordinated services and community building activities for adults, young people, families and children. The primary goal of the evaluation is to establish whether the community building activities lead to improved participation and a sense of belonging among newly arrived immigrants from non English speaking backgrounds. Other objectives include identifying the primary obstacles that impede participation in community building activities and developing a framework for the integration of the community building activities into the broader service support. This project is being carried out by Alperhan Babacan.

Access Health: Towards Best Practice in Primary Health Care for Marginalised Populations
Data collection has been completed for an extensive evaluation of Access Health, a primary health care facility established in Grey St, St. Kilda for use by street based injecting drug users and sex workers, as well as homeless persons. James Rowe worked on-site throughout 2005, collecting information through interviews and surveys with staff and service users. The final evaluation report was completed in 2006.
An Analysis of Police Investigations into Sexual Assault

This project identifies the factors that most influence the outcomes of investigations of rapes reported to Victoria Police over a three-year period, 2000-2001 to 2002-2003. Suellen Murray coordinated the project, and is contracted to undertake this work by the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault at the Australian Institute of Family Studies. The project is funded by the Department of Victorian Communities’ Office of Women’s Policy, having been identified as a research priority by the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Sexual Assault.

Evaluation: Quality of Life Outcomes Following Kew Residential Service Redevelopment

This project evaluates the quality of life outcomes following the Kew Residential Service (KRS) Redevelopment. The redevelopment aims to provide KRS residents with an enhanced quality of life through accommodation support and lifestyle opportunities more consistent with those experienced by the broader community. It is intended that the evaluation will inform ongoing service provision during the redevelopment and any future redevelopments undertaken by the Department of Human Services. It is anticipated that the evaluation will identify critical success factors for providing accommodation support consistent with the aspirations of the State Disability Plan, and that these findings will add to the body of contemporary research in disability services. The project is funded by the Department of Human Services and is conducted by Kelley Johnson and Christine Bigby.

Regional Futures and Local Profiles

The Salvation Army’s Melbourne Central Division is proposing to reorganise its social programs into a regional basis, with five service regions clustering local government areas (LGA):

- Inner West Region – Cities of Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay & Moonee Valley
- Central Region – Cities of Port Phillip & Melbourne and a section of the City of Stonnington
- North West Region – Cities of Moreland & Hume
- North East Region – Cities of Yarra, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik & Whittlesea
- Outer West Region – Cities of Brimbank, Wyndham & Melton.

This project investigates the socio-demographic and quality of life profiles by LGA, forecasts (with a 10 year time-frame) by LGA and evaluation and interpretation of trends and of emerging needs. It offers policy guidance on using this data for a regional planning framework. This project is being jointly undertaken by CASR and AHURI.

Counting the Homeless 2006

This research project is designed to enumerate the homeless population in Australia on Census night 2006, using ABS census data supplemented by data from the third national census of homeless school students and information from the National SAAP Data Collection. Specific objectives include:

- up-to-date information on homeless young people in 2006
- state and regional population figures
- data on the social characteristics of homeless people
- information on marginal residents of caravan parks
- information on Indigenous homelessness.

The project is being carried out by Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain in conjunction with Associate Professor David MacKenzie from Swinburne University. The project runs from 2006-09. The research partners are: the Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; all State and Territory governments; the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
Evaluation Framework for the Family Violence Reform Initiative

This project develops a framework to evaluate the impact of the additional $35.1 million provided to the family violence service system in Victoria. The work is being carried out for the Department for Victorian Communities and is undertaken by a team of researchers from the Centre for Applied Social Research and the Collaborative Institute for Research Consulting and Learning in Evaluation (CIRCLE). The team is lead by Suellen Murray and also includes Anastasia Powell (CASR) and Patricia Rogers, Delwyn Goodrick and Kaye Stevens (CIRCLE).

International Grants

SSHRC Standard Grant (Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada). Restructuring in the Non-Profit Social Services – Canada/Australia Comparisons. 2005-2008.

Undertaken by Donna Baines, this project involves a comparison of changing conditions and relations within and across the non-profit social services sector in Canada and Australia. The goal of this two country study is the development of a detailed and multi-level portrait of restructuring and the changing conditions of work life in the non-profit social services, paying particular attention to race, gender, managerialism and workplace resistance. In-depth interviews with a variety of players in the sector explore larger trends and local impacts.

Institute for Globalization and the Human Condition (Canada). The Reshaping of Gender, Care Work and the Community Services Sector.

This project builds on intensive case studies undertaken by Donna Baines in Canada (Visiting Professor from McMaster University Canada, currently based in CASR at RMIT). Adopting a case study approach, this project will explore how the complex and changing social relations play out in everyday work life, including the overlay of federal and state funding, industrial relations, occupational health policies and practices, gender conventions, and the valuing, and in some cases undervaluing, of care work in the Australian community sector. The Research Team including Donna Baines, Sara Charlesworth, Heather Fraser, Catherine McDonald and Peter Robinson, is particularly interested in convergence and non-convergence among and between Australia and Canada. The team plans to extend the study to other countries with significantly similar approaches to social welfare which include New Zealand, the U.K. and Hong Kong.

Other Projects

Other projects include projects that are self funded or funded from internal sources.

Transitions to Adulthood: Young People with Disabilities, their Families and Life After School

The project extends research undertaken in 2005 by Suellen Murray that examined families’ care of children with severe disabilities and was developed in response to discussions with the Association for Children with a Disability. The project aims to present case studies of the experiences of families of young people with severe disabilities who are transitioning to post-secondary school options.

AHURI Project. The Implications of Loss of a Partner for Older Private Renters

This project is using quantitative and qualitative research methods to measure the housing and related financial consequences of loss of a partner for older (50+ years) Australians, with particular attention to those receiving income support payments. The project features the use of panel data sets that identify pathways of adjustment by tenure type after the loss of a partner. The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey is an important source of data, as is the AHURI-3M Microsimulation Model and the FaCS Longitudinal Data Set. Alperhan Babacan and Chris Chamberlain are undertaking the qualitative research which involves 60 in depth interviews. The other researchers are Prof. Gavin Wood and Alice Stoakes (AHURI, RMIT), Grant Cullen and Marc Adam (Murdoch University) and Mike Dockery (Curtin University).
New ARC Projects 2007

ARC Discovery Project. Job Quality and the Mental Health and Well-Being of Working Parents and their Children

Supporting the health and well-being of parents and young children is a national research and policy priority, as is the need to promote better work and family balance. The project examines how the quality of parents’ jobs influences parent, family and children’s well-being. The research uses nationally representative data from two waves of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (Growing Up in Australia), a unique study of families with young children. The project addresses key components of Australia’s Second National Mental Health Plan and policies targeting a healthy start to life, supplying evidence for the development of family, employment and social policy that promotes and protects the well-being of Australian families. The project is being conducted through the ANU. Sara Charlesworth is part of a multi-university research team including L. Strazdins (ANU), B. Rodgers (ANU), M. Bittman (ANU), J. Nicholson (Griffith), R. D’Souza (ANU), D. Broom (ANU) and M. Clements (ANU).

ARC Linkage Project. 150 Low Income Australians: A Group Biography Over Time

This project, being undertaken with Industry Partner, Jobs Australia, will examine how welfare-to-work policies are experienced. The project aims to illuminate how incentives and obstacles are perceived, to describe patterns of interdependency, and to understand people’s discourses and values about welfare and obligation. The research team, lead by John Murphy at the University of Melbourne, includes Suellen Murray (RMIT), Jenny Chalmers (UNSW, formerly RMIT), Greg Marston (UQ), Belinda Probert (Melbourne) and Mark Peel (Monash).
Publications

Books


Research Reports


Charlesworth, S., Campbell, I. and Fridell, W. ‘Work and Family Balance in Regional Victoria’, a pilot project report for Industrial Relations Victoria and Regional Development Victoria, October 2006.


Refereed Journal Articles


Refereed Conference Proceedings


Conference and Seminar Presentations


Johnston, G. Department of Human Services (North West Region), staff seminar, November 2006.

Johnston, G. Department of Human Services Central, in-house staff seminar, November 2006.


Murray, S. ‘Belonging and Disruption: Women, Family, Place and Domestic Violence’, Belongings: Women, Family and Place, a symposium to celebrate the work of Professor Patricia Crawford, Perth, July 2006.


Rowe, J. ‘Sex Work in Australia: Employment, Exploitation and Empowerment,’ 3rd Annual RMIT Women and Work Research conference, RMIT University, Melbourne, 30 November 2006.


Invited Presentations


Johnson, G. ‘Pathways In and Out of Homelessness’, post graduate housing policy course, RMIT University, August 2006.

Johnson, G. Staff board and strategic session, Sacred Heart Mission, March 2006.


Newspaper Articles


Academic Supervision of Students

Chamberlain, C. is supervising Guy Johnson’s PhD on ‘On the Move: A Longitudinal Study of Pathways In and Out of Homelessness’, RMIT University.

Chamberlain, C. is supervising Chris Davies’ PhD on ‘Governing the Fortunes of Problem Gamblers’, RMIT University.


Charlesworth, S. is second supervisor for Krystyna Kostecki’s PhD thesis ‘The Lasting Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse: Older Australian Women Who “Never Get Over It”, in the School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning.


Murray, S. is supervising Elli McGavin’s MA at the Melbourne College of Divinity on ‘Charting Change in Domestic Violence: A Study of Mary Anderson Lodge’.

Murray, S. is supervising Theresa Lynch’s PhD, ‘Understanding Why Women Kill: Exploring the Circumstances and Motivations of Why Women Kill Friends, Acquaintances and Strangers’.

Murray, S. and Chamberlain, C. are supervising Robyn Martin’s PhD on ‘Revolving or Evolving Doors: What Factors, Conditions and Contexts Promote Sustainable Pathways out of Homelessness for Women?’, RMIT University.

Rowe, J. is the first supervisor on Naomi Ngo’s PhD thesis ‘The White Path’, in the School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning.

Wood, G. is supervising full-time PhD student, Alice Stoakes’ thesis ‘Household Dissolution; Housing and Labour Market Adjustments’, RMIT University.


Guest Lecturing


Chamberlain, C. ‘Using Census Data’, guest lecture, Quantitative Research Methods, HUSO 2166, RMIT University, 21 March 2006.


Chamberlain, C. ‘Quantitative Data’, guest lecture, Social Work Research, HUSO 1283, RMIT University, 2 October 2006.

May, R. weekly tutorials, Employee Relations, School of Business, RMIT University.

Throughout 2006, CASR has continued to enhance its links with community partners by hosting or being involved in a number of public events.

February:

Launch of Benchmark Report

The Victoria University research report, ‘Australian Homeless Jobseekers Aged 18-35: Benchmark Report for YP4,’ was launched on the 16th February at Education Unions House, Southbank, Melbourne, by Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain of CASR.

When people experience both homelessness and unemployment at the same time, they face a ‘double jeopardy’. Providing appropriate responses to homeless jobseekers is a serious challenge facing service providers. To meet this challenge more effectively, YP4 commissioned a benchmark report to quantify young homeless jobseekers in Australia and Victoria and to provide some basic socio-demographic information about them. The benchmark report, written by Marty Grace, Nicole Wilson and Deb Batterham, contains point-in-time estimates and annual estimates for homeless jobseekers aged 18-35 in Australia and Victoria.

March:

Book launch: James Rowe

Dr James Rowe’s book, ‘Streetwalking Blues: Sex Work, St Kilda and the Street’, was launched in St Kilda on the 31st March by Deputy Chief Magistrate Jelena Popovic. The book was the culmination of a project which had been jointly funded with the assistance of Inner South Community Health Services, Sacred Heart Mission, Salvation Army Crisis Services and Port Phillip Council.

A longitudinal study, completed with 15 street sex workers in St Kilda (10 women, 3 men and 2 transsexual workers), the research extended over a period of 18 months. It addressed pathways into street-based sex work, the compulsion to continue to engage in sex work despite the dangers, and the potential means by which these dangers might be minimised. It did so from the perspective of the workers who took part in qualitative interviews.

April:

Public Seminar on Low Pay in the Australian Service Sector

This forum was held on the 5th April in Storey Hall at RMIT University, to launch the findings to date from the ARC Linkage Project: Low Paid Services Employment in Australia, Dimensions, Causes, Effects and Responses. The key speaker was Professor Barbara Pocock of the Centre for Work and Life, University of South Australia.

The forum served as a means to launch research findings to date and addressed the likelihood that the Federal Government’s ‘WorkChoices’ Act would lead to increases in the number of low paid Australian workers. With the social implications of such a development not having been adequately researched or debated, there was concern about whether the expansion of low pay would enlarge the number of working poor. The forum presented evidence from workers about what life on low wages is like for them and their families and provided new statistics on low pay in Australia.
June:

New Standards Conference, 21-23 June
The Centre for Applied Social Research, with support from the Victorian Government, hosted a conference at the University of Melbourne, ‘New Standards for New Times? The 8 Hour Day and Beyond’. Among the organisers were Dr Cathy Brigden, Senior Lecturer at the School of Management, RMIT and Dr Iain Campbell of CASR.

The conference formed part of state-wide celebrations and exhibitions to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the 8 Hour Day (1856-2006). It was joined with a conference that examined the history of the 8 Hours Movement and subsequent campaigns of Australians to assert control over their working lives. ‘New Standards’ addressed the broad range of working-time issues confronting Australian workers in Australia at the start of the 21st century.

Speakers were invited from both interstate and Victorian universities and organisations. We were also delighted to welcome the following keynote speakers:

Steffen Lehndorff, Director of the Working Time and Work Organisation Research Unit at the Institute of Work and Technology (IAT) in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, who spoke on the topic of ‘Flexibility and Control: New Challenges to Working-Time Policy in the European Union’.

Deirdre McCann, an expert in labour law, currently working with the conditions of Work and Employment Programme at the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva Switzerland, who spoke to the conference on ‘Regulating Choice: Voluntariness and Individual Influence in Working Time Law’.

Leah Vosko, currently holder of a Canada Research Chair in the School of Social Sciences, York University, Canada, who addressed the conference on ‘The Regulation of Precarious Part-Time Work’.

Papers from the conference will be published in a special Issue of ‘Labour and Industry’ in 2007.

July:

MacroMelbourne Initiative Forum
The Centre for Applied Social Research is a partner in the Melbourne Community Foundation (MCF). The forum was the second stage of the MacroMelbourne Initiative, a project committed to ensuring that Melbourne becomes a more liveable, equitable, just and inclusive city for all its people.

Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain attended this forum, which addressed opportunities for a new collaborative approach to evidence based, strategic, philanthropic and corporate funding.

September:

Public seminar - Asylum Seeker Symposium
This one day symposium, convened by the Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT and the Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University of Technology, was held in Melbourne on the 15th September.

Speakers included Dr Alperhan Babacan of CASR and Professor Linda Briskman of Curtin University of Technology and the symposium was opened by Associate Professor Chris Chamberlain of CASR.

Academics came together to explore the international scope and practice of interdiction and deterrence of asylum seekers. The symposium also sought to analyse ethical, legal and political dimensions underpinning the international policy domain.
October:

Public Seminar - Casualization in Italy

Dr Jenny Chalmers of CASR invited Dr Ilaria Vanni to speak at RMIT on ‘Imagining Precarity: the Visual Culture of Recent Campaigns Against Casualization in Italy’.

Dr Ilaria Vanni works at the Institute for International Studies, University of Technology Sydney. Her broad field of interest is in cultural production and politics.

Dr Vanni’s seminar was based on a paper that builds on Hardt’s idea of Italy as laboratory of political experimentation by looking at the contact zones between creative and communicative practices and activism in relation to the struggles that in recent years have redefined and explored precarity: the casualization of the work force.

November:

3rd Annual Women and Work Conference

The 3rd Annual RMIT Women and Work conference was held at RMIT on the 30th November.

The conference was designed to foster discussion and provide the foundation for future collaborative research across the University. The conference was supported by RMIT’s Centre for Applied Social Research and the School of Management. It also served to launch the 2nd RMIT Women & Work Monograph.

Speakers included Dr Donna Baines, Visiting Professor, Dr Liz Branigan, Ms Sheree Cartwright, Dr Sara Charlesworth, Dr James Rowe and Dr Kerri Whittenbury of CASR, who were joined by colleagues from across the University.

Papers were presented on a wide range of topics including:

- Challenging Gendered Perceptions of Part-Time Work in Policing
- Part-Time Work: Policy, Practice & Resistance in a Manufacturing Organisation
- Sex Working in Australia: Employment, Exploitation & Empowerment
- Women Who Work for Women Who Work: Care Work & the Cost of Giving
- Why You Need to be an Accountant to be a Single Mother: the Maths of Mother Work Under Welfare Reform
- Shooting the Messenger? The Role of Mobile Phone Use in Work-Family Balance.

Launch of a Special Issue of Labour & Industry (16, 3)

Labour & Industry is a leading academic journal, currently hosted at the Centre for Applied Social Research. It publishes articles on a wide variety of themes covering industrial relations, industrial sociology, organization studies, labour economics, labour law, labour history, new management systems, changing labour markets and industrial relations in New Zealand and the broader Asia-Pacific region.

The special issue, ‘Women in Information Technology’ was launched at RMIT on the 3rd November. The edition is guest edited by Dr Gillian Whitehouse (University of Queensland) and contains eight articles that examine the patterns of employment and the experiences of women in the IT sector.
December:

Public Seminar – Criminalizing the Care Work Zone?

The seminar, ‘Criminalising the Care Work Zone? The Gendered Dynamics of Legal and Administrative Strategies to Confront Workplace Violence’ was hosted by the Centre for Applied Social Research at RMIT on the 13th December. The paper was delivered by Professor Donna Baines, who is visiting from the Department of Labour Studies and Social Work at McMaster University, Montreal in Canada.

Workplace violence is a growing occupational health risk for workers in the restructured social services environment. Using literature and data drawn from a larger ethnographic study of violence, stress and workload in the non-profit social services, this article explored four major legal remedies:

- the right to refuse dangerous work (administrative)
- the duty to warn (civil)
- assault charges (criminal)
- criminalizing employer neglect (criminal)

in relation to how these remedies might work within the specific, gendered, context of care work and a work force who are not well insulated from management retaliation or their own concerns about impacts on vulnerable, albeit violent, clients.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheree CARTWRIGHT</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Women’s Decision Making about Paid Work and Family after Childbirth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony CHALKLEY</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Ethnographies of Housing: Exploring the Role of Housing Officers in Public Housing Service Provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris DAVIES</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Governing the Fortunes of Problem Gamblers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy DOUGLAS</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>The Teaching of Diverse Models of Alternative Dispute Resolution: Second Generation Practice, Therapeutic Jurisprudence and Legal Education in Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicholas HALPENNY</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Professional Discretion in Child and Youth Services: the Impact APA(I) of the Contract State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guy JOHNSON</td>
<td>PhD APA(I)</td>
<td>On the Move: A Longitudinal Study of Pathways In and Out of Homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krystyna KOSTECKI</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>The Lasting Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse: Older Australian Women Who ‘Never Get Over It’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teresa LYNCH</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Understanding Why Women Kill: Exploring the Circumstances and Motivations of Why Women Kill Friends, Acquaintances and Strangers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robyn MARTIN</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Revolving or Evolving Doors: What Factors, Conditions and Contexts Promote Sustainable Pathways out of Homelessness for Women?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elli McGAVIN</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Charting Change in Domestic Violence: A Study of Mary Anderson Lodge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naomi NGO</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>The White Path</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pauline PARKER</td>
<td>PhD APA(I)</td>
<td>A History of MacRobertson Girls High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny-Lynn POTTER</td>
<td>MSocSci</td>
<td>The Application of Health Impact Assessment to Domestic Violence Policy Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter ROBINSON</td>
<td>PhD APA</td>
<td>What Ageing means to Homosexual Men in Australia</td>
</tr>
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</table>
# Financial Report for 2006 and 2005

For the period 1st January 2006 to 31 December 2006

## INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARC (Discovery &amp; Linkage)</td>
<td>545,703</td>
<td>525,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Contracts</td>
<td>284,158</td>
<td>388,670</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Grants Scheme</td>
<td>33,799</td>
<td>27,636</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Infrastructure Block Grant</td>
<td>67,155</td>
<td>45,412</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Income</td>
<td>84,539</td>
<td>104,494</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Investment Fund</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
<td>239,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,035,354</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,338,564</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N*University Investment (URRI) to fund three salaries: 239,292

## EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and On-costs</td>
<td>953,275</td>
<td>762,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumable Materials</td>
<td>69,013</td>
<td>37,302</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor Equipment, Repairs &amp; Hire</td>
<td>17,240</td>
<td>19,428</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Costs</td>
<td>6,419</td>
<td>5,439</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>8,020</td>
<td>35,963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing, Advert. &amp; Public Relations</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>4,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Motor Vehicle Expenses</td>
<td>119,831</td>
<td>65,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Administration Costs</td>
<td>85,098</td>
<td>41,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Legal &amp; Other</td>
<td>1,369</td>
<td>8,719</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility Expenses</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>926</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants to other institutions</td>
<td>66,777</td>
<td>38,895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Scholarships</td>
<td>36,443</td>
<td>72,357</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Related Expenses</td>
<td>2,212</td>
<td>4,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,367,237</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,097,813</strong></td>
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</table>

## OPERATING RESULT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/(Deficit)</td>
<td>(92,591)</td>
<td>240,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add retained earnings from previous year</td>
<td>564,917</td>
<td>324,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Capital Equipment Expenditure</td>
<td>2,464</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accumulated earnings at year end</strong></td>
<td><strong>469,862</strong></td>
<td><strong>564,917</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>